**Biblical Foundations – Conversion (Faith and Repentance) pt.1**

**What is saving faith? What is true repentance? Is repentance from sin necessary for salvation?**

The previous lessons explained how God himself (through the human preaching of the Word) issues the gospel call to us and, by the work of the Holy Spirit, regenerates us, imparting new spiritual life within. In this lesson we will examine the response to the gospel call which is referred to as conversion. ***Conversion is our willing response to the gospel call, in which we sincerely repent of sins and place our trust in Christ for salvation.*** The word ***conversion*** means turning- here it represents a spiritual turn, a turning from sin to Christ. The turning from sin is called ***repentance***, and the turning to Christ is called ***faith***.

**True Saving Faith includes Knowledge, Approval, and Personal Trust**:

1. ***Knowledge alone is not enough***- Personal saving faith, in the way Scripture understands it, involves more than mere knowledge. Of course, it is necessary to have some knowledge of Christ and what he has done. (Romans 10:14) But knowledge alone about the facts of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection for us is not enough, for people can know facts and rebel against them or dislike them. (Romans 1:32)
2. ***Knowledge and approval are not enough***- Knowing the facts and approving or agreeing that they are true is not enough. (John 3:2, Acts 26:27-28)
3. ***You must trust Jesus to save you personally***- In addition to knowledge of the facts of the gospel and approval of those facts, in order to be saved, you **MUST PERSONALLY** decide to trust or depend on Jesus to save you. In doing this you move from an interested observer to an active participant in a new relationship with Jesus Christ. Therefore, *saving faith can be defined as trusting in Jesus Christ as a living person for forgiveness of sins and for eternal life with God*. This definition emphasizes that saving faith is not just a belief in facts ABOUT a person, but personal belief IN that person (Jesus Christ). This sense of personal trust is seen in several passages of scripture in which initial saving faith is spoken of in very personal terms, often using analogies drawn from personal relationships. (John 1:12, John 3:16, Matthew 11:28)
4. ***Faith should increase as knowledge increases***- Contrary to the current secular understanding of faith, true New Testament faith is not something that is made stronger by ignorance or by believing against the evidence. But saving faith is consistent with knowledge and true understanding of facts. (Romans 10:17) When people have true information about Christ, they are better able to put their trust in him. Moreover, the more we know about him and about the character of God that is completely revealed in him, the more fully we are able to put our trust in him.